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A

Funeral Sermon

ON THE

DEATH

OF

Mr. *HENRY BROWNSWORD*,

Who Deceased *April* 27. 1688.

Preached, in compliance with his Desire and Direction on his Death-Bed, *May* 6. being the Lords-Day immediately following his Interrment:

AND NOW,

To satisfie the Importunity of some of the Hearers, Published

By *T. C.*

PSAL. 89. 47.

Remember, how short my Time is. ——

LICENSED, *June* 18. 1688.

LONDON,

Printed for J. Salusbury at the *Atlas* in *Cornhill*. 1688.

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THE PREFACE to the *Reader.*

IT is so little a while since, that I exposed some hasty thoughts on a like Occasion to the view of the World, that I believe very few, besides such as are concerned in the furthering of this, do expect so sudden a publication of another Trifle. When I made that first adventure, I did not imagine that any of my Friends would take Encouragement from it, to put me upon a second; for I had reason enough to suppose, that those Papers would meet with such cold entertainment, as might justly stop all others from coming abroad after them; but their reception having been somewhat more favourable, than I lookt for, I am the more easily drawn into the snare again.

As for the Censures of those, whose malignant tempers incline them to think and speak nothing but evil; I do resolvedly despise them; tho at the same time I heartily wish, that they may gain that

good by other Diſcourſes, which they are not capable of getting from mine; for if Chriſt be preacht *and receiv'd, I have learnt of the* Apoſtle Paul *to* rejoyce, *tho I am not the Inſtrument. If any*
Jam. 3. 14. *perſons* have bitter envying and ſtrife in their hearts, *'tis more their* ſin, *than my* Infelicity; *and I ſhould be much rather ſolicitous to perſwade their* Repentance, *than procure their* favour; *becauſe I am ſure that my ſtanding or falling does not depend upon their approving or condemning ſentence.*

I muſt own my ſelf to be very much ſwayed and influenc't in this caſe, by the Judgment of ſome, whom I have a great reverence and value for; I am well ſatisfied in the goodneſs of the End *which they propos'd, tho I doubt of the ſufficiency of the* Means; *but if through the bleſſing of God the ſucceſſe of this Diſcourſe ſhould bear any proportion to their charitable opinion of it, it will be pleaſing to them, that they gave ſuch advice, and it will not be grievous to me, that I have follow'd it.*

The plain deſign is nothing elſe, but to quicken mens application of their hearts to Wiſdom; *for the generality of Mankind have ſo weak and faint a ſenſe of their Mortality upon them, that tho*

nothing

nothing is more certainly to be expected, than the putting off of this Tabernacle, *yet nothing is leſs conſider'd; and that which is the* end of all men, *is* laid to heart *almoſt by* none, *till it comes upon them. We might be* taught to number our days *by obſerving the meaſure of other Men's; the crowds which are continually* going to their long Home, *admoniſh them that ſurvive,* how frail they are, *and how ſerious they ought to be; but the oftner theſe Lectures are read, the ſooner they are forgotten, and the frequency of inſtruction leſſens the power of impreſſion:* Sermons *of this kind are too commonly* heard, *after the ſame manner that mens* years are ſpent, *viz.* as a tale that is told. *Hence it is that after they have worn out a Life more vain and ſtupid, than that of Beaſts, they dye at laſt (in the worſt ſenſe)* as a Fool dyeth, *and are ſwallowed up not only in the* Heart of the Earth, *but in the* belly of Hell. I *have offer'd ſomething towards the Cure of this inexcuſable ſottiſhneſs, in the following pages, if the Readers will but make uſe of it to the ſame purpoſe for which it was written. Young men eſpecially will here ſee (who are apt to be too much diverted by urgent temptations) how great a neceſſity lyes upon them,* to be ſober-minded, *and to*

Eccleſ. 7. 2.

Pſal. 90. 9.

Tit. 2. 6.

abound

abound in that work, *which deserves the* most *and* best *of our time; that they may not lose their Souls in the pursuit of* Youthfull lusts, *and drown themselves in the short pleasures of sin, till the slender thred of their Lives is broken, and they drop into eternal Fire.*

If any are effectually quicken'd and wrought upon, so as seasonably to remember their last
Lament. 1. 9. End (*which because* Jerusalem *did not*, she came down wonderfully) *the Author earnestly beggs of such, that they would put up one request for him before the Throne of God, That he may have an increase of Gifts and Graces suitable to his Work, and fill up the Station, wherein God (the Holy Ghost) hath set him, with the most usefull and eminent services; which is the highest ambition of his Soul, and the Avowed Scope of his Life, who would by all means approve himself,*

A Faithfull Promoter of
Truth and Holiness,

T. Crosse.

The

The Period of Humane Life, &c.

Eccleſiaſtes III. 2. former p^t

A Time to be born, and a Time to dye.

THE general Scope and deſign of this Book, written by the *wiſeſt of Men*, is generally known and underſtood to be a Repreſentation of the Vanity of the Creature. What is ſaid in the beginning of this Chapter, may very well be look't upon as a proſecution of that deſign; for the evident mutability and tranſitorineſs of all things here below, is a moſt evident Demonſtration of their being *Vain*. What better Character can be given to thoſe things, whoſe duration is ſo ſhort, and whoſe deſtruction may be ſo ſudden? Things, which are many times *pluckt up* ſoon after they are *planted*, and *broken down* after they are *built*; which may be *caſt away*, as well as *gathered together*, and *loſt* as well as *gotten*? The Grand Propoſition, branch't out afterwards into ſeveral particulars, is ſet down firſt of all in thoſe words,

Verſ. 2. 3. 5. 6.

Ver. 1. words, *To every thing there is a ſeaſon, and a time to every purpoſe under Heaven.* This extends both to natural and contingent things, and alſo to free and voluntary Actions, as appears by the Inſtances which *Solomon* brings in the following Verſes. The ſumme of all is this, That there is the punctual time determined in Heaven for the beginning, continuance, and end of all things upon Earth; every Creature hath its limited ſeaſon, after which it muſt *paſs away*; and ſo there is a perpetual viciſſitude and change eſtabliſht in the World by the ſure and unalterable Will of God. Every Event depends upon his Foreknowledge and Decree, not upon humane Counſels and Endeavours. The firſt Inſtance given, is that which I have choſen; *viz.* the *Birth* and *Death* of reaſonable Creatures; there is a *ſet time* for both.

A time to be born.] *i. e.* An appointed ſeaſon for our coming into the World; the *Age*, as well as *Place*, is of God's determination; he orders not Pſal. 87. 4, 5. onely, that *This man ſhall be born here*, and *that man there*, but one *now*, and another *then*. He ſets the Acts 17. 26. time for our Nativity, as well as the *bounds of our habitation*; Our *Imperfect Subſtance* lyes naked to Pſal. 139. 16. his Eye, and our *unfaſhioned Members are written* 71. 6. *in his book*: And it is He that *takes us out of our mothers bowels*. The *onely wiſe God* preſerves the order of Nature in this caſe; he ſometimes indeed Hoſ. 9. 14. *gives a miſcarrying womb*, but he commonly arms againſt it. Even the brute Creatures by a Divine Job 39. 2. Providence do *fulfill the number of their Months*; and therefore we may well conclude, that of us, (who are of much *more value*) he takes peculiar care; that our *travelling* Parents may not *have ſor-*

row

row before their *hour is come*, and that when it is come, they may *have cauſe of joy*. Tho I muſt add, that ſuch as are *born out of due time* (into the *world*, as the Apoſtle *Paul* was into the *Church*) with reſpect to the natural courſe, are born however in the preciſe time, with reſpect to the appointment of God. John 16. 21. 1 Cor. 15. 8.

But there is likewiſe [*a Time to dye*, i. e. through Sickneſs or Old-age; for as to caſual or violent means of death, the wiſe man ſpeaks of them, in the next verſe; *A Time to kill, and a Time to heal.* This is what the Apoſtle calls the *Time of our Departure*, viz. out of the World; a time, when this *earthly houſe of our Tabernacle* which is ſo curiouſly fram'd, muſt be *diſſolv'd*; a time, when the *Wheel*, whereby the blood now circulates through our Veins, ſhall be *broken*; a time, when all our Vital and Animal operations ſhall ceaſe; when our *ſpirits muſt return* to God, as a *Judge*, or as a *Father*, and our duſt be left behind to mingle with its native Earth. God directs the *Dart to ſtrike through our Liver*, as he did the *Arrow*, which pierc't the King of *Iſrael between the Joynts of the Harneſs*; he ſends the fatal Diſtemper to aſſault us, or lets looſe other evils upon us (which *walk in darkneſs* at other times under his Almighty reſtraint) when he hath a mind to cut us off. Every *Fever* kindled in our bodies, is (as it were) a *fire from Heaven*, which is oftentimes *blown by the breath of God*, till our fleſh is conſum'd. *It is appointed* to us, not onely *once to dye*, but *how* and *when*; the particular time of our Birth is not more fully ſettled in the Councels of God, than the time of our Death; both are link't together in the Text; it V 3. 2 Tim. 4. 6. Eccleſ. 12. 6. Heb. 9. 27.

is the ſame Inviſible Hand which *writes down* our Names in the *book of the Living*, and *blots them out* too.

Some have been ſo Critical, as to obſerve from theſe words, the ſhortneſs, and almoſt *nothingneſs* of Humane Life; becauſe tho it be ſaid, that there is *a time to be born, and a time to dye*, yet it is not ſaid, that *there is a time to live*; the two extreams of Living are mentioned, *the beginning of dayes, and end of Life*; but Life it ſelf ſeems to be thruſt up into ſo ſmall a compaſs, that it is ſcarcely worthy to be named; *Our age is as nothing before God*; and indeed here the Holy Ghoſt is pleaſed to paſs it by, as a thing *which is not*.

Pſal. 39. 5.

Doct. The Obſervation, which I would handle, is this, That *Every one who hath had his time to be born, hath his time to dye certainly fixt by God.*

The Method which I propoſe, is,

I. 1. To State the point, that it may be rightly underſtood.

II. 2. Prove the Truth of it.

III. 3. Open the Reaſons of it.

IV. 4. Apply it.

I. I begin with that which is firſt propounded, the *right ſtating* of the point, and ſhewing, How we muſt underſtand this, that God hath certainly fixt every ones time to dye. This will be ſufficiently clear'd by the following Propoſitions.

1 *Prop.* God hath not ſo fixt our time of Dying, as to exclude the uſe of proper means for the preſervation of our own Lives. The *Secret*

Will

Will of God is not our Rule, but the *Revealed*; we are not to examine what God hath *purpoſed in himſelf* to do, but we ſhould mind what he hath *directed us* to do. The conſideration of an *Event* (which is doubtfull to us, ſo long as it is future, thô not to God) muſt not ſhut out the practice of manifeſt *Duty*. That Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not kill*, is (like all the reſt) *exceeding broad*; and obliges us to the doing of every thing, which may conduce to the recovering of our impaired Health, and continuing of our endanger'd Life. There is a criminal *Neglecting of the body*, which the Scripture does condemn; and exceſſive Abſtinence from *food*, is ſcarcely a greater degree of *Self-murther*, than the Diſuſe of needful *Medicine*. God *cauſes the Herb to grow for the ſervice of Man* in both reſpects, and we ought not to ſlight it in either. Our Phyſick is one of God's *good and perfect Gifts* as well as our nouriſhment; and an unthankful refuſal of it, is (as the Apoſtle ſays in another caſe) *a ſinning againſt our own body*. When we apply ſuch means to ſuch an end, as the great Author of Nature ſeems to have made them for, we do our part, which muſt be done, thô it be a matter of uncertainty, whether God will do his; as in the Caſe of *David*, *While the Child was yet alive, I faſted and wept, for I ſaid, who can tell, whether God will be gracious unto me, that the Child may live?* Aſa's *ſeeking to the Phyſicians* was not his fault, but ſeeking to them, and *not to God*. *Hezekiah*, though he had the aſſurance of his life by an extraordinary ſign, was commanded to *take a lump of figgs, and lay upon his boil*. God does not decree the end, without the means which lead to it;

Pſal. 119. 96.

Coloſ. 2. 23.

2 Sam. 12. 22.

2 Chron. 16. 12.

2 Kings 20. 7.

it; the *using* of them belongs to us, the *succeeding* of them unto God.

2. *Prop.* It muſt be granted, that Men may ordinarily contribute very much towards the prolonging of their own lives by the *exerciſing of themſelves to Godlineſs*, and on the other ſide to the ſhortening of them by the contrary wickedneſs.

1 Tim. 4. 8. *Godlineſs hath the promiſe of the Life which now is*, and no temporal Promiſes are more conſiderable, than thoſe of this kind. *It* (that is, *Wiſdom*, or

Prov. 3. 8. the *fear of the Lord*) *ſhall be health to thy Navel,*

v. 16. *and marrow to thy bones.* And again, *Length of dayes is in her right hand.* 'Tis without queſtion, that Sobriety and Temperance, Patience and Meekneſs, are like a kind of *Salt*, which keep the body from *corrupting*, and prevent a multitude of thoſe Pains and Maladies which might invade us by the help of the oppoſite ſins. Religion does greatly tend to make our dayes both comfortable and many; but then the ſame God, who ordains us to long life, ordains likewiſe to that which does

Eccleſ. 7. 17. promote it. Wicked men *dye before their time*, through their own folly; either their ſenſual luſts, or furious paſſions deſtroy them. Some *dye in*

Job 36. 14. *Youth*, becauſe *their Life is among the Unclean.* Many *Goats* will be found at Chriſt's left hand in the laſt Judgment, which *deſtroy'd themſelves* in a natural, as well as ſpiritual ſenſe, through their own *Laſciviouſneſs.* Many *quench the ſpark of Life* in their own boſoms by their *full Cups*, and ſo they

Pſal. 90. 5. are *carried away as with a flood* of Wine. Many indulge themſelves in being *angry* (like *Jonah*) *unto death*; their wrathful and peeviſh tempers

are

are a kind of *fretting Leproſie*, which waſts and wears away their ſpirits. In ſome, *the ſorrow of the world worketh death*; perhaps they precipitate and haſten *their own* diſſolution, by immoderate and extravagant grieving for *another*. All this, thô againſt the Rule of God's Word, may be an accompliſhing of his hidden Purpoſe. 2 Cor. 7. 10.

3. *Prop.* It cannot be denied, but that God does take multitudes away out of this world, at ſuch ſeaſons, as in *humane probability* they might have ſurvived. As Miniſters are enjoyn'd to *Preach the Word in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon*, i. e. to take all opportunities, whether more or leſs convenient, ſo God does variouſly *let looſe his hand*; and whereas he brings ſome to the *grave in a full age*, others are *cut down out of time*, it may be, as ſoon as they ſpring up. We do all *accompliſh as an hireling, our day*; but all our dayes are not of *equal length*. As the Labourers were ſent *into the Vineyard*, ſo men are called *out of the World*, at different hours; ſome at the *third*, others at the *ſixth*, others at the *ninth*, and but a few (comparatively) permitted to ſtay till the *eleventh*. One comes *like a ſhock of corn in its ſeaſon*, when 'tis fully ripe; another drops off in the *flower of his age*, and the *beginning of his ſtrength*. Some have *Job*'s wiſh, they *dye from the womb*, and give up the ghoſt as ſoon as they breath in the open air; others are pull'd by the *hand of the grave* from their Mothers breaſts: Some cloſe their eyes, and fall into their laſt ſleep, when they firſt *diſcern between good and evil*; and as ſoon as they know any thing, or ſhew themſelves to be reaſonable creatures, they 2 Tim. 4. 2. Job 14. 6. Job 3. 11.

are

are removed into the *Land of darkneſs*, where all the *light* of wiſdom and knowledge is *put out*. Multitudes *goe off* the ſtage, when the time of their greateſt ſervice and uſefulneſs is *coming on*; the *number of their months is cut off in the midſt*, and their *Sun goes down at noon*. Thouſands dye while
Chap. 21. 24. their *bones are moyſtened with marrow*, and while the *ſilver cord* is ſtrong; while their *natural force* is rather improving, than *abated*, and while *the Keepers of the houſe ſtand firm*. Theſe may be ſaid to
Iſa. 38. 10. be *deprived of the reſidue of their years*, becauſe as to ſenſible appearance, the *candle* might have *burnt much longer*, than God ſuffered it to do. How ſmall a number reach to *ſeventy years*, in compariſon of thoſe that expire before! it is not the lot of all, nor of very many, to *bow with age* before their final *fall*, or to have *one foot in the grave*, before their *whole bodies are caſt into it*. The moſt are cut ſhort of what their natural vigour might have drawn out the thread to, but yet their time was ſo order'd by God.

4. *Prop.* God hath ſometimes ſeem'd to alter a *conditional threatning*, thô never his *abſolute and real purpoſe*, as to the period of mens lives. Thus it was in that known Caſe of *Hezekiah*, when he was not only *ſick unto Death* (in reſpect of his Diſeaſe, which was mortal in its kind) but the Prophet alſo brought him that meſſage from God,
2 Kings 20. 1. *Thus ſaith the Lord, ſet thy houſe in order, for thou ſhalt dye, and not live.* God ſeems to threaten here in a poſitive and peremptory manner, but there was a ſecret condition, which God reſerv'd in his own breaſt, which neither the Prophet, nor the King

King were acquainted with; he look't for ſpeedy execution, but God had in himſelf intended, what he afterwards actually granted, *a Repriewe of fifteen years.* The prediction of *Niniveh's* deſtruction by the mouth of *Jonah*, was not much unlike to this; *yet forty dayes, and Niniveh ſhall be overthrown:* Jonah 3. 4. The Prophet himſelf took this in an abſolute ſenſe, and concluded them to be a People given up to ruine without remedy; therefore he was *diſpleas'd* at God's reverſing of the threatning and ſparing of the City, leſt the honour of God's truth, and the reputation of his own Office ſhould be blemiſh't by it. The Exception of their Repentance was not *expreſs'd*, but however it was *included* in the deſign and purpoſe of God; therefore when there was a change in their works, there was a change in his Diſpenſation; and the *Ninivites* beforehand ſeem'd to apprehend, that ſo *it might be*, which gave them encouragement to alter their own courſe; *Who can tell, if God will turn and repent*, &c. God v. 9. is always *of one mind*, though his *Actual Providence* may differ from his *conditional Word*; the time determin'd by his will, is exactly obſerv'd; but the time ſpoken of hath been ſometimes ſlipt, becauſe it hath been ſpoken of under ſome condition which God hath not thought fit to mention, and that condition hath fail'd.

5. *Prop.* We can never ſay, when any ones time to dye *is come*, 'till we are warranted to ſay it, by the *Event*. The Volume of God's Decrees is *roll'd up* ſo cloſe, that his own Diſpoſing Hand muſt *unfold* it to us. If *the Judgments of God are* Pſal. 10. 5. *far above out of our ſight*, ſurely his thoughts and intentions

intentions much more; he that *judges according to appearance* in this case, may very frequently judge amiss; we cannot tell, when any mans *Course* will be *finisht*, till we see him *at the end of it*. Many times we *have the sentence of death in our selves*, when our time of life after that is considerably prolong'd; perhaps some have fancied the *shadows of the evening stretcht out* upon them many years agoe, whereas their *day is not yet* spent. *God hath put* particular *times and seasons* (with reference to persons, as well as Nations and Churches) *in his own power, and it is not for us to know them*, 'till the Event hath discover'd them. Some few Extraordinary *Revelations* have indeed been made; such as to *Simeon*, that *he should not see death, till he had seen the Messiah*; but the generality of the *Children of Light* themselves are *in the dark* as well as others, in the point of their own departure. *Young men* are not able to see *so far* before them, and *Aged persons* notwithstanding their larger Experience, find *such knowledge too wonderful for them*; thô they live *so near* to the *day of their death*, they must still confess (with *Isaac*) that they *know it not*. Yea, I may say of this, as Christ of the day of Judgment, that even *the Angels* in Heaven are ignorant of it; they who *carry* Souls out of their Bodies into *Abraham's bosom*, cannot tell when they shall be call'd to perform that office. The *Devils* in Hell know it not, unless God is pleased (for some higher ends than the gratification of their Pride or Curiosity) to communicate it to them; what Satan said to *Saul* under *Samuel's* Mantle, [*To morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me*] he either came to know *this way*, or else the *sad circumstances*

Acts 1. 7.

Luk. 2. 26.

Gen. 27. 2.

1 Sam. 28. 19.

ces of *Saul's* condition made it then ſo *likely*, that he might eaſily foreſee and ſafely foretell it under that ambiguous Expreſſion, [to morrow] which often ſignifies *any future time*, as well as the *next day*. Neither we therefore, nor any other Creature, can ordinarily paſs any infallible Judgment upon this *Time to dye*, 'till the *very moment* that the *breath goes forth*.

II. I proceed now to the ſecond thing, which is, to prove the *truth* of this Doctrine, that God hath moſt certainly fixt every one's time of Death. The following particulars will manifeſt this, ſo as to put it (I think) beyond any reaſonable contradiction.

1. It is a Doctrine which the Holy Ghoſt in Scripture doth *moſt expreſly* teach: (and the Atheiſtical Cavils of ſuch as refuſe or deride this teſtimony, deſerve not to be regarded.) That Spirit which *ſearcheth the deep things of God*, does affirm this to us. It is put by way of Queſtion, which implyes the ſtronger affirmation; *Is there not an appointed time to Man upon Earth? and are not his Dayes like the dayes of an Hireling?* Job 7. 1. 'Tis plain from hence, that as the time of a common Labourer hath its limitation *from us*, ſo hath the time of our ſojourning *from God*; there is as much a *Divine* appointment with reſpect to the one, as an *Humane* in reference to the other. *Job* makes this an argument to God for a little eaſe and relaxation from trouble; *Seeing a Man's dayes are determined, and the number of his months is with thee, and thou haſt appointed his bounds which he cannot* c. 14. 5, 6.

pass, Turn from him that he may rest; q. d. "It is "impossible to add a moment to my own time "beyond what thou hast order'd; I cannot exceed "the measure which thou meteſt to me, and there-"fore let this short life and unavoidable death suffice "for my punishment, without thy inflicting of "any further Calamities. These two Texts are such clear and evident Witnesses to this truth, that if there were no more, *they* would sufficiently establish it.

2. The Holy Scripture gives several *examples*, as to *particular Persons*, the Period of whose Lives was strictly markt out by God, and accordingly foretold. It was determin'd, that the sheep of
2 Kings 22.17. *Israel* should lose (*Ahab*) their shepherd at *Ramoth Gilead*, and this was effectually brought about by his hearkening to fatal Seducers. The death of *David*'s *Child* was positively threatn'd from God
2 Sam. 12. 15. by *Nathan*, and the sentence was immediately put in execution. *Ahijah* is instructed to foretell the death of *Jeroboam*'s *Child*, at that punctual *minute*,
1 Kings 14. 12. when the feet of the Mother should enter into the City; and so it fell out. The Prophet *Jeremy*
Jer. 28. 16, 17. tells that false Prophet *Hananiah*, *This year thou shalt dye, because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord; so he dyed the same year in the seventh month.* God signifyed by a strange Hand-writing to *Bel-*
Dan. 5. 26, 30. *shazzar*, that *his Kingdom was number'd and finisht*, and *in that very night he was slain.* Thus *Christ*
Mat. 16. 28. Prophecyed, that there were *some standing by him who should not see death*, 'till he exercis'd his Kingly Power in the destruction of the Jewish Nation; which must be grounded upon his knowledge

of God's immutable Purpose concerning the lives of his Disciples. But Christ himself, (who as a Man, *was made like unto us in all points, sin only excepted*) is the most remarkable Instance of all; as the means and manner of his death were agreeable to the *determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God*, so was the time and season of it too: His Enemies 'till then, thô they had Malice enough to kill him, and their Wills stood bent to such a bloody design, were yet mightily restrain'd; *They sought to take him* (they did not only desire it, but us'd some endeavours towards it) *but no man laid hands on him, because his Hour was not yet come*: As God did not send him *into* the World, so he did not deliver him up to those Murderers, who would have sent him *out of* the World, *'till the fulness of time came*. Afterwards we find, the strain was altered; *When Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart from hence to the Father*, he makes Preparation for his Death; then the restraint was taken off, and opportunity to apprehend him fell in with their Inclination. Now, if Christ, upon the score of his Humanity, as he was *partaker of flesh and blood*, had a fixed time to dye, why should not We, who *partake of the same?*

John 7. 30.

c. 13. 1.

3. The Spirit of God mentions some *particular times*, to which there is a *Necessity of dying* annex't; which intimates, that *They* were the set times in God's Decree. *Sickness* will not be *unto Death*, if God hath order'd us to survive it; upon this supposition, we may say (as *David*) in the most dangerous extremities, We *shall not dye, but live*. Age may be *renewed as the Eagles*: God can enable men

Psal. 118. 17. 103. 5.

to sustain the infirmities of their declining Years for a long time, if it be consistent with his Unchangeable Will. This is the constant Rule which God acts by, and therefore nothing can happen contrary to it; 'tis a *mountain* not to be *remov'd*, or *leapt over*; but when we come to such a *point* of time, death is truly Inevitable. So the Holy Ghost speaks in *Jacob*'s case; *the Time drew nigh, that Israel must dye.* What necessity was there of his Death just then, when he came so short of the *dayes of his Fathers*, (as he himself to *Pharaoh*) but only because his time was spun out to its *full length*, according to the Divine decree, and therefore then it *must* be broken off? Thus God speaks to *Moses*, when *Joshuah* was called to be his Successour; *Behold thy dayes approach, that thou must dye.* If we would know the reason, why this was necessary, it was not because Nature was exhausted in him, and could subsist no longer, for his *Eye was not dim*, when Death came to *shut* it; but God has put a *bar* in his way, (*Thou shalt not go over this Jordan*) and therefore he *must* be translated to the *Heavenly Canaan*, before he came to step upon the borders of the *Earthly*. This shews, that the Irresistible Will of God does *bound* our Lives, thô his Precepts may not *regulate* them: Calls to Evangelical Obedience are oft refus'd, but the Summons of Death must be obey'd.

Gen. 47. 29.

V. 9.

Deut. 31. 14.

c. 34. 7.

c. 31. 2.

4. The utter Ineffectualness of *Natural Remedies* to some, and the wonderful Recoveries of others, import God's settlement of Man's time to dye. How many Cases have been known, wherein the greatest Learning, and Skill, and Fidelity, and Care, and Diligence,

Diligence, have fail'd of the desired end! How often hath God *made foolish the wisdom* of the Ablest Physicians, when as to what was aim'd at and expected from them, they have fallen under the Character of *Job's friends, Physicians of no value!* Job 13. 4. How many times hath God forc'd them to end with that sad Complaint, which was used in another sense, with reference to *Babylon, We would have healed* such an one, *but he is not healed!* Jer. 51. 9. How often hath God defeated the application of the most proper means, and withheld success, when the Performance of Instruments could not be blam'd! When such as have been employ'd to work the Cure, might acquit themselves, as God does in another Case, *What could have been done more, which we have not done?* yet, (like the *Egyptians*) they have *help'd in vain and to no purpose*; it hath Isa. 30. 7. been only a fruitless *striving against the stream* of Providence, for at the time which God appoints, no Art can prevent or put back the blow. A little Infant might as well *contend with Horses*, which by an easie and sudden motion can trample him into the dirt, as the most powerful Medicines prevail against the purposes of Heaven. And on the other side, how many hath God restor'd, *above* and *against Hope*, by fewer, or less likely Means, and perhaps by none, because their time hath not been yet come! When their *Soul hath drawn near to the grave, and their Life to the destroyers*, God hath *brought them back from the pit* again. *Epaphroditus was indeed nigh unto death* (standing even upon the threshold of Eternity) and *yet God had mercy on him*, because his Glass was not run, nor his Ministry fulfilled. How frequently Job 33. 22. p. 30. Phil. 2. 27.

hath

hath God *breath'd upon the dry bones* of Conſumptive perſons, when the *Grave* hath ſeem'd to be *ready for them*, and (as it were) *open'd its mouth* to take them in! His reviving and recovering of
Rom. 11. 15. ſome men, hath been like *life from the dead*, (as the expected Return of the *Jewes* will be,) and the reaſon of it lies here, becauſe Death cannot lay any *actual claim* to us, till the Decree of God is ready to bring forth, and before that, tho we are almoſt in the *poſſeſſion* of death, we ſhall be reſcued out of it.

III. I come now to the Third thing, which is to Open the *Reaſons* of this Truth, and ſhew, why every One's time to dye, is limited and fixt by God. I ſhall onely alleadge two grounds for it in this place.

1. The Limitation and fixing of this time belongs to God upon the account of his *Soveraignty*. As we are the *Works of his hand*, we are the *Objects of his Dominion*; God as our Creatour, hath an undoubted right to ſet bounds to our Being. Who ought to diſpoſe of us with relation to our preſent or future ſtate, or our paſſage from the one to the other, but he that made us? If *He is*
Iſa. 64. 8. *the Potter, and we are the Clay*, then it is very fit, that the *earthen Veſſel* of our Bodies ſhould be *daſht in pieces*, whenſoever he appoints: if he *formed*
Zechar. 12. 1. *our ſpirits within us*, it is fit that they ſhould *return to him* at the determined time. What Injuſtice can it be in God, to limit that Being which he hath given us, by his own pleaſure, or to meaſure out the time of our continuance in a ſtate, into which He himſelf hath put us? 'Tis a Principle

ciple which holds among *Creatures*, that They *may doe what they will with their own*, tho their *propriety* is not so *Absolute*, as God's; therefore 'tis much more lawfull to him, *in whom we live and move*, and without whom we cannot *bee* so much as one moment: How common is it for men to possess places of Honour and Profit at the *Arbitrary Will* of those that first bestow'd them? how much more reasonable, that God, who fram'd us out of nothing, should unalterably fix our time of Life? Matt. 20. 15.

2. It belongs to God upon the account of his *Wisdom*. He understands best, when it is most expedient to put a period to the Lives both of *Good* and *bad* men; and therefore their Death is the issue of his Appointment.

First, The *onely wise* God knows what is the best time for the *Removal* of his Servants out of the World, when it will be most for their good, and more to their advantage, than a further deferring of it. *Life and Death* (among other things) are said to be *Ours*, if *we are Christs*. Life tho so 1 Cor. 3. 22.
transitory and uncertain in it self, is our [illegible] *i. e.* the continuance of it, by the excellent management and disposal of God, in order to a better. Our Eternity depends upon this present moment; therefore this moment must be lengthen'd out, till that Eternity be secur'd in the Gospel-way and method. God must in his Infinite wisdom preserve and prolong the Lives of his *Elect*, till they are brought out of a *State of Sin*, and efficaciously *called to be Saints*; and till they come to Repentance after *particular falls*, or else they must perish, as well as others. (Which is impossible.) God must also take care, that

that their Time may not end, while they have more *work to doe*, and that their ſands may not be ſpent, before their whole buſineſs in the World is diſpatch't. Therefore he that *knows all things from the beginning*, is capable of ſetting ſuch a time for our departure hence, as we, if we had the like Underſtanding, ſhould be inclin'd to chuſe for our ſelves.

Secondly, God can tell, what is the fitteſt time for the *chaſing of wicked men* out of the World, and therefore it becomes him to appoint it. Tho he *endures them with much long-ſuffering*, he will not ſuffer them *too long*; an *unbounded* exerciſe of Patience towards them, would be diſhonourable to himſelf, and miſchievous to the Church; therefore after ſuch a forbearance, as anſwers his end, he takes them away, when it will moſt advance the glory of his Juſtice. What a *field of Blood* would the World be, if ſome ſort of men were permitted to *live* above *half their days!* What *havock* would ſome Tyrants make, if God did not *root them up*, before [illegible]e *Almond-tree comes to flouriſh!* As he *knows how to reſerve the unjuſt to the day of judgement*, ſo he can tell, when it is moſt ſeaſonable to bring them to death. How *worthy* then is God to have the ordering of all our Times, who is able to order them with ſuch matchleſs Prudence!

Rom. 9. 22.

2 Pet. 2. 9.

IV. The Fourth and laſt thing, is the *Application* of this point. I ſhall mention ſome of thoſe many uſefull Inferences which may be drawn from it.

1. If there be a Time to dye certainly determin'd for every one by God, it gives us a ſad Demonſtration of the *Entrance of Sin into the World.* Mortality

Mortality is the Fruit of Apoſtacy: the Eating of the *Tree of Life* would have follow'd upon not plucking the Tree of Knowledge; Man would have been *tranſlated* to Heaven, without drinking of this bitter unpleaſant Cup, by an *eaſie inſtantaneous change*. We fell into a *dying ſtate*, in that very day, when we broke our Covenant with God. Death begun it's *Reign*, as ſoon as the old Serpent had conquer'd our firſt Parents, and corrupted their Allegiance to the Soveraign of the World. Yea ſome think, that ſin brought Death not only upon *Adam* and his Poſterity, but upon the *brute Creatures* too; for if he had continued Innocent, what need of Beaſts being ſlain for *ſacrifice*? And we do not find that they were ſlain for *food*, till *Noah*'s time: He had the firſt Commiſſion to *eat of their fleſh*, when the wickedneſs of Man was ſo great, that God ſent a Deluge to waſh it away. *Death* is the *Wages of ſin*; which plainly implyes, that it had not been *due*, if ſin had not made it ſo. How hatefull ſhould the *Root* be, from whence ſuch *Fruit* proceeds!

Gen. 2. 17.

Ch. 9. 3.

Rom. 6. 23.

2. This ſhews the *Particularity* of Divine Providence; which muſt be ſuppos'd (as a Conſequent of this Doctrine) to watch over ſingle Perſons in all the ſingle Minutes of their lives. It does not only extend to the whole Creation, or to the whole lump of Mankind *in general*, but to every *one*, ſeparately by himſelf, and every *part*, in every individual *moment*. *The very hairs of your heads* (which are very inconſiderable, even to a *Proverb*) *are all number'd*; ſayes our Lord to his Diſciples.

Matt. 10. 30.

It is neceſſary that God ſhould be thus mindfull of us, or elſe we ſhould never live till our time comes. There is but a ſhort and narrow *ſtep betwixt us and death*, whitherſoever we goe; and multitudes of unſuſpected miſchiefs, are always like a Sword hanging over our heads, which it is the work of Providence to divert and keep off. Let us admire thoſe *Thoughts of God to us ward, which cannot be reckon'd up*; if they were not ſo *many*, our dayes would be *fewer*.

Pſa. 40. 5.

3. Learn to *fear that God* who is the Lord and Diſpoſer of your Time, but do not terrifie or enſlave your ſelves with *any other* kind of Fears. Acknowledge and adore his might, *in whoſe hand your breath is, and the Soul of every living thing*. Stand in aw of him, of whom 'tis written, That *if he ſet his heart upon man, and gather his ſpirit to himſelf, All fleſh ſhall periſh together, and man ſhall turn again unto duſt. Fear not thoſe, who are not able to kill the body*, till the ſpace of time allotted you by God in this world, is compleated. *Fear not the ſigns of Heaven*; let not an inſignificant Calculation of your Nativity fright you, as if the *Light of life* muſt be concluded by the *Stars*, and all that were born under ſuch a *Poſition of the Heavens*, muſt certainly meet with an *untimely fate* on Earth. Theſe are vain Imaginations and groundleſs Fancies, for Men, and more eſpecially Chriſtians, to perplex and diſquiet themſelves with. I would adde, that it is a ſhame for ſuch as pretend to *know the Lord*, to conſult, or depend upon the Judgment of thoſe that fetch all their inſtructi-

Job 34. 14, 15.

Jer. 10. 2.

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ons from *Hell*. Remember the caſe of *Ahaziah*, how dearly he paid for *enquiring of Baalzebub, the God of Ekron, whether he ſhould recover of his Diſeaſe*; *Therefore* (ſayes God, by *Elijah* to him,) *Thou ſhalt not come down from that Bed on which thou art gone up, but ſhalt ſurely dye.* 2 Kings 1. 3,4.

4. Be not forgetfull of this Time to dye *in the midſt of your Pleaſures*, and plenty. You who *ſtretch your ſelves upon beds of Ivory*, be perſwaded (with *Job*) to *make your beds in the darkneſs*; you who dwell under ſtately Roofs, whoſe Habitations are a kind of *Palaces*, let the *Grave be your houſe*; you who are ſolacing your ſelves in ſuitable and delightfull *Relations, ſay to Corruption, Thou art my Father, and to the Worms, Thou art my Brother and my Siſter*. It is a very profitable Leſſon (in this ſenſe) to *Dye daily*: We ſhould make the thoughts of Death ſo cuſtomary and familiar, that when Death it ſelf comes, it may not be, *as tho ſome ſtrange thing had happen'd unto us*. Live in the midſt of all your worldly Comforts and Contentments as one that is *appointed to dye*; I mean, as a penitent condemned Malefactor would make uſe of the overflowing abundance of a full Table. You, who *ſit at eaſe*, and *fare deliciouſly*, remember what you *live by*, more than the Food, which you take in at your Mouths, *viz. the Word which proceeds out of the Mouth of God*. Job 17. 13,14. Pſal. 79. 11. Deut. 8. 3.

5. Let this be a *Bridle* to Immoderate *Carefulneſs*. What will all your ſolicitude amount to,

when *your Souls are required from you?* Of what *uſe*, (and in whoſe *poſſeſſion*) will theſe things be then? Will Riches procure you *a diſcharge in that VVar?* will Silver and Gold *bribe* the Meſſengers of death, and ſend them away again? *All that a man hath, he would give for his life*; (an unqueſtionable *Truth*, tho ſpoken by the *Father of lies*) but nothing will be accepted as a Ranſome in this caſe. If a man would ſacrifice *the ſubſtance of his houſe*, to obtain one day's Reprieve, *it would utterly be contemned.* It is a very material Queſtion, which our Saviour puts to the Multitude; *Who of you by taking thought, can add one Cubit to his Stature?* the *Original word* which we render [Stature] ſignifies alſo [Age], and might better be ſo tranſlated here. q. d. which of you can enlarge the *Hand-breadth* of his own days, by exceſſive diſtracting thoughtfulneſs? What Man can *renew the Leaſe* of his frail Life, when 'tis *expiring*, tho he hath *loaded himſelf* never ſo much *with thick clay*, and be willing to lay it all down for ſuch a purpoſe?

Job 2. 4.

Matt. 6. 27.

Ἡλικία.

6. Let it teach us to *referr* our ſelves, and others in whoſe welfare we are concern'd, more *ſubmiſſively* to God. Conſider that the *living God* ought to have the ſupream diſpoſal of ſuch *dying worms.* Be not *confident* and *peremptory* in any thing you undertake, ſo as to forget your dependance upon God. The great Apoſtle, when he had propos'd the future handling of many important Doctrines, adds, *This will we do, if God permit.* Another Apoſtle gives us the ſame Caution; *You ought to ſay, If the Lord will, we ſhall do this or that.* Do not direct

Heb. 6. 3.

Jam. 4. 15.

direct God as to the concluding of your own Lives, nor venture to say, when affliction pinches you, as *Elijah* did in his passionate fit, after furious *Jezebel* had threaten'd him, *It is enough now, Oh Lord, take away my Life.* 1 Kings 19. 4. Do not quarrel impatiently on the other hand, if God *pull down* your tabernacle, when you are at the *top* of your prosperity; or if any who are near to you are snatch'd away, when their continuance with you is most desirable. God had the greatest *title* to them, and therefore might *demand* them when he pleas'd; the blow which is struck, is no more than what might, and ought to have been expected, and your sorrow cannot retrieve it, or *bring them back again*: They will not *spring* out of their Graves, by being *water'd* with your *Tears*. 2 Sam. 12. 23. Mortal things should be quietly yielded up to the God of our, and their Lives.

7. Let nothing tempt you to *presume*, that you shall remain *alwayes* as you are, and that this Life is for ever. Preservations and Deliverances, how oft soever repeated, are wretchedly abus'd, if they harden you into an Opinion, (like that of *Agag*) that *the Bitterness of Death is past*. You should still say, 1 Sam. 15. 32. as *Job* did to God, *I know that thou wilt bring me to the House appointed for all the Living*. Job 30. 23. The Sentence is not taken off, thô you may be *spar'd a little* (as *David* pray'd) *to recover strength, before you go hence, and be no more*. Psal. 39. 13. Thô the *snare* may have been frequently *broken* for you, assure your selves, it will *hold* you at the last. And as it is *foolish* to entertain any such *thoughts* of Living alwayes,

alwayes, ſo it is highly *ſinful* to cheriſh any ſuch *deſires*; they who are over-fond of Living ſtill longer and longer, betray an unwillingneſs to dye at all, and a ſecret wiſh of *Immortality here* on Earth, which is inconſiſtent with a ſtate of Grace. Be not only convinc'd therefore of this *truth*, that there is a time to dye, but that the verifying of it is your *priviledge*; 'tis really a kind of *Dying life* which you now live in the fleſh; you undergo *many deaths* now, and this *one* will put an end to all. Look then upon the *pangs* of this Death as the happy forerunners of your *Birth* into a better World.

8. *Redeem* as much *time* as poſſible, for the *working out of your Salvation*. Loſe no more than you have loſt already; bewail paſt folly with ſeriouſneſs, and improve thoſe few hours which are yet to come with greater care. Do not ſatisfie your ſelves with *thinking* or *reſolving* to be, and to do better; for in the day of Death all theſe reſolu-
Pſal. 146. 4. tions and thoughts will *periſh*, unleſs they are put in execution before hand. Make ſuch ſeaſonable Proviſion for this great Change, that you may
Eccleſ. 9. 12. not be *ſnared in an evil time*, as the *ſons of men* too commonly are: The *Preſent* time is moſt acceptable to God, and moſt ſafe and advantageous for you, therefore do not let ſlip this in hopes of *another*, or of a *more convenient* ſeaſon. Dread the thoughts of *lying down in the duſt* under a *load* of ſins unpardoned and unrepented of. Remember, that *between* this Time to be born (in the Text) and the Time to dye, there is a Time to be *born again*;

again; if that time be neglected, a woful Eternity follows. You *go aſtray as ſoon as you are born*, and will you not *Return* before Death comes? you are *born in ſin*, will you alſo *dye in ſin?* you are *born, like the wild Aſſes colt*, will you alſo *dye without inſtruction*, without the receiving of that which is daily offer'd? Conſider upon what a *ſlippery* foundation your Earthly houſes ſtand; every irregular Heat or Cold may make a mortal *breach*; and your bodies are the Receptacles of many hundred Diſeaſes, and have the roots and ſprings of all within themſelves: So that Death ſeems to be *twiſted* and *woven* together with the *thread* of Life. Death is always actively *working in us*, and therefore it muſt needs be *high time to awake out of ſleep*, before we *fall aſleep*, and awake not again 'till the end of the World. *In Death there is no remembrance of God*, let this quicken you to remember him *now*. How very *watchful* ſhould we be, who are ſaid to *fly away like a dream and viſion of the night!* How *circumſpectly* ſhould we *walk*, while the Light laſts, who know, that the *Light is ſhort, becauſe of Darkneſs!* How *ſwift* ſhould we be *to hear*, whoſe Ears muſt in a little time be ſtopt! and how zealous ſhould we be in ſerving of God, who may expect ſo ſuddenly to appear before him!

2 Cor. 4. 12.

Pſal. 6. 5.

Job 20. 8.

c. 17. 12.

9. If God hath the appointing of our Time to dye, let us reſt in this aſſurance, that when he takes away any of his Children (ſeemingly) *before the time*, it is not without reaſon. It does not always happen, that *the fear of the Lord prolongeth*

Prov. 10. 27.

Eccleſ. 7. 15. *longeth dayes*: A *Righteous man* ſometimes *periſheth in his righteouſneſs*. Indeed it was threaten'd as 1Sam. 2. 32, 33. the Calamity of *Eli*'s houſe, that *there ſhould not be an Old Man in it for ever*, but they ſhould all dye immaturely, and *wither* in the *bloſſoming* of their dayes. And it was a Curſe upon *Judas*, (he being the Perſon, as ſome think, prophetically aim'd at in that Pſalm) Pſal. 109. 8. *Let his dayes be few*. But when it falls upon Good men, we may be confident, that to *Them* it is a bleſſing; as it does not come by *Chance*, ſo 'tis not ſent out of an *ill deſign*. *Joſiah*, who begun to ſeek the Lord while 2Kings 22. 20. he was young, was *gather'd to his grave in peace*, when his Years (as well as Heart) were tender; and this was the accompliſhment of a Promiſe to him. Who can tell, *what evils may come upon the Earth*, which they who are gone to Heaven have totally eſcap'd? or however, can it be too ſoon at any time to *enter into the joy of our Lord*? the Apoſtle *Paul* ſets a mark of reſpect upon *Andro-* Rom. 16. 7. *nicus* and *Junia*, becauſe they were *in Chriſt before him*; and is it no advantage to be *with Chriſt* before us? If the *firſt born* of *Nature*, and of *Grace* are more priviledg'd and honour'd than the reſt, ſhall not the firſt-born of *Glory* have likewiſe the preference to us, who are ſtill left behind in this lower form of ſinful, imperfect, ſuffering, militant Believers? Sure, *early* Death is no more to be lamented by thoſe that are in their *right mind*, than a *quick paſſage* to our deſir'd and intended *Port*. That is truly a *Long* life, in which the *end* of Life is anſwer'd: *One day* in a ſtate of Grace, is *more than a thouſand* in a courſe of ſin: The Saint

of

of twenty two years (which was almoſt the Age of our *Deceaſed Friend*) is better than the *Sinner of an hundred years old.* Let that wicked *Proverb* therefore, [*A ſhort life, and a Merry,*] be exchang'd for this, [*A ſhort life, and a ſober, godly, Religious life.*] Iſa. 65. 20.

Such a Life was that which this *Young Man* liv'd, whoſe *dying requeſt* hath been fulfill'd at this time: Concerning whom I could ſay many things, which (in the language of the Apoſtle) are *pure,* and *lovely,* and *of good report*; but the affectionate Regard which (I muſt confeſs) I had to his Perſon, and ſhall always have to his Memory, ſhall not tempt me to ſay any thing, but what may bear the Character of an *undeniable truth.* One of the ſignal Mercies, which he often acknowledg'd with thankfulneſs, was this, That he was born of *Holy Parents,* and thô he was left deſtitute of them in his Childhood, yet God *took him up,* (according to his Promiſe) and by a ſpecial Providence afterwards he enjoy'd the benefit of a very *pious Education,* the impreſſions whereof he retain'd to the very laſt, and the ſeed which was then ſown, ſprung up plentifully in his *Riper years.* It pleaſed God (for the exerciſe and trial of this Perſon, who was then, as appears by the effects, *ſavingly wrought upon*) to caſt his Lot in a place, where, (as he himſelf inform'd me) the Fear of God was not, where ſerious Godlineſs was vilifi'd and laugh'd at, and (to uſe his own words) where *his performance of, and engagement in, the beſt of duties, was reproach'd, as converſing with the* Philip. 4. 8. Pſal. 27. 10.

Devil: He found cauſe at length to complain of ſome *decayes* and abatements in his Zeal and ſpiritual fervour, which he aggravated and bewail'd, more than other men do the blackeſt Impieties. The ſenſe of this was abundantly reviv'd and increaſed in him, by the opportunity which he had of an *Edifying Miniſtry* in a *Worthy Family* to which he ſtood related; whereupon the Devil ſet upon him with a great deal of violence and fury, and was his conſtant Troubler, by caſting multitudes of *Fiery darts* into his Soul, and raiſing ſuch *ſtorms*, as would have *ſhipwrack'd* him for ever in Deſpair, if a Divine Power had not ſupported him. He was not without ſome Doubts and afflicting Jealouſies, (upon the forementioned account) after Providence remov'd him into a place, which was more according to his wiſh, where Religion is countenanc'd and practis'd, and where he *ſhew'd all good fidelity*. He had ſtill (I ſay) ſome *clouds* rolling over his Mind, and the Tempter would be frequently *buffeting*, and aſſaulting of him, becauſe he was *deſirous to have him*, but Chriſt's Interceſſion prevail'd, and *his Faith fail'd not*: And now the Lord hath *finally rebuk'd thee* (Oh Satan,) and tranſlated his Servant out of thy reach.

I have brought him thus, after a ſhort Narration of the Circumſtances of his Life, to his *Death-bed*, which (as I am witneſs, and many others) God made very *eaſie* to him, by a wonderful reſtraining of the Devil (his old Adverſary,) and giving in clear, yea raviſhing, manifeſtations of himſelf, and of his Love in Chriſt; inſomuch, that

(as he told me with his own Mouth,) *All Temptations* were perfectly ſcatter'd and *kept off*, and he had *received more comfort in this ſickneſs, than in his whole life before.* He had liv'd (as he ſaid) in continual *fears of Death*, but now *long'd for it*, and *triumph't* in the proſpect of its *near approach*; expreſſing how *unwilling* he was to be *detain'd* any longer from Chriſt in this *priſon of the Body*. It was his earneſt *Prayer* in my hearing, (as for his own Soul, ſo) for this Congregation which he had Joyned himſelf to, that *God would bleſs them with all Spiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt*; and I muſt declare this further to the Glory of God, who *ordained ſuch ſtrength* out of his Lips, that I never heard more *awakening Counſels* and diſcourſes from any Pulpit, than from that Bed, whereon he dyed, to thoſe that were about him. *Solomon* ſays, *There is a time to weep, and to Mourn*; Eccleſ. 3.4. Certainly *this is the time* for us. Let us weep, *not for him*, who ſo zealouſly ſought our good, *but for our ſelves*, who ſo coldly and carelеſly ſeek our own. He ſpent his Breath and Spirits in the midſt of his ſharp agonies and conflicts with a raging and violent Diſtemper, to tell what *God had done for his Soul*; but how many in their time of health and eaſe *take little thought*, unleſs it be *for the Body*, and for that they take *too much!* His excellent Example upbraids many Elder perſons (whoſe Profeſſion is as ſtrict as his) of whom he *got the ſtart*, while he lived, in the *running of his Race*, as he hath now by Death, in the *receiving of this Reward*. He could ſay (with the Apoſtle) *To me to live is Chriſt*, and (therefore) Philip. 1. 21.

to Dye is gain. His *way* was *Holineſs*, and his *End* was *Peace.* He is now poſſeſt of a Life after Death, becauſe he was not (like the fooliſh Children of this World) *dead while he liv'd.* He now *dyes no more*, and his putrifying Carkaſs, which we have laid in the Earth, ſhall become a *Glorious Body* in Heaven, when all viſible things are diſſolved, then ſhall we ſee him again in the ſplendid and magnificent *Retinue* of Jeſus Chriſt, at his ſecond Appearance, to perfect our Salvation.

There ought (methinks) to be an *Application* of theſe *Providences*, as well as of *Scripture-Texts*; I will only hint, what it is our Duty to make. The Lord hath *ſmitten us* here (we may ſay) *with breach upon breach*; firſt one that *brought forth Fruit in her Old-age* was pluck't away from us, now another *Pleaſant plant*, while his *Leaf was yet green*; thô they are *rooted out* of this Land of the Living, God hath removed them into a much better *ſoil*, where *Weeds* and *Briars* are not, but every thing of *the right kind* is always *flouriſhing.* How long *our Tree will ſtand* where it does, we know not, nor which *Diſciple* will take his turn to *go to the Sepulchre* next. Let no Man magnify his *Youth*, or lean upon that as an allowable excuſe for ſinfull and dangerous delays; how much rather ſhould you *chuſe the fear of the Lord* betimes, than come and *knock at Gods Door* too late! You ſee, they are not *Gray hairs* onely which are *brought down to the Grave*; you cannot tell how *near* the *Evil Day* of Death may be, when you *put it* Job 16. 22. *furtheſt off.* As *Job* ſaid, *When a few years are come,*

I ſhall go the way, whence I ſhall not return; ſo every one of us may ſay, When a few *days* (it may be, *Moments*) are come, I muſt depart into a World which I never ſaw, and ſtand before a Tribunal, which I have not yet ſufficiently thought of. Every day puts a Period to many Lives, which are as well ſecur'd, as yours; Do not therefore ſet Eternity at ſuch a vaſt diſtance from your Minds, leſt it ſhould ſpoil your carnal Mirth and Jollity (which is really no better than *Madneſs*,) but remember that Eccleſ. 2. 2. your Souls are at ſtake, and that Time (as well as the *World*, and *its Luſts*) is *paſſing away*, and if your Account be not duely *prepared* here, it will be very uncomfortably *given up* hereafter. Devote your *full ſtrength*, and Juvenile vigour unto God; give Chriſt the early poſſeſſion of your Hearts and command of your Lives; as *Hezekiah* 2 Chron. 29. 3. *in the firſt year, and firſt month of his Reign, open'd the doors of the Houſe of the Lord.* Come not as *vain Spectators* to ſuch Aſſemblies, (much leſs, as prophane and malignant *Scoffers*,) but as *Reverent and conſcientious Hearers* of the Word of Life; then we ſhall have ſome hope, that your Converſations may *ſavour of the Knowledge of Chriſt*, and ſpread his honour in the World. In ſhort, *Follow the Faith*, and imitate the practice of this *Deceaſed Perſon*, that you may *dye his Death*, and inherit his Bleſſedneſs: Or elſe, thô your *general Lot* of Mortality in this World be the ſame, your *particular portion* in the next will be vaſtly different. The *two Thieves* which were *Crucified* together (at our Saviours Paſſion) upon Earth, were not *crown'd* together in Heaven; becauſe the one was

Con-

Converted, and the other not. It is the Pſalmiſts
Pſalm. 89. 48. enquiry, *What man is he that liveth, and ſhall not*
ſee Death? Our bleſſed Lord gives us the beſt ſa-
John 8. 51. tisfaction to it, *If a man keep my ſaying, he ſhall*
never ſee Death. Believers do not dye the *common*
death of Men; they may fall by the ſame Diſ-
eaſes, and their Duſt be mingled in the ſame Pit,
but their *Immortal part* will be overlaſtingly divi-
ded. There is a *great Gulph fixed* betwen *the Spi-*
rits in Priſon, and the Souls in Paradiſe.

THE END.

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